

Community Alliance for Positive Solutions Inc.

Representing 360+ supporters, including 150+ paid members, and growing...



Serving

Yarloop

Waroona

Hamel

Harvey

Cookernup

Wagerup

Other
Impacted
Areas

CAPS monitor air in historic partnership with DEC

CAPS and the Air Quality Management Branch (AQMB) of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) have signed an agreement to work together to compare ambient air sampling and analysis techniques. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between John Sutton of the DEC/AQMB and CAPS co-chairs Vince Puccio and Merv McDonald on 22 October.

The agreement states that the Air Quality Management Branch will pay for lab analysis and transport costs for up to 20 air samples taken by the Yarloop Bucket Brigade. In return, the Bucket Brigade will take concurrent air samples in two DEC Silco canisters, along with a bucket sample, during an emission event. One canister and one bucket sample will be sent to a lab of CAPS' choice, and one canister will be sent to the DEC's lab. Using the combined methods to sample community air quality in this type of partnership is a first in Australia.

The AQMB will also provide assistance in reviewing and commenting on analysis reports, and will place results on the DEC website once both parties agree to its release. CAPS will have ownership of their data, and will continue to independently monitor emission events.

Strict documentation guidelines and standards of operation will ensure quality assurance for the project. All current and future Bucket Brigade members will be retrained to include a more rigorous protocol, with a representative of the AQMB observing the training and distributing Silco canisters.

The agreement, which operates until 31 July 2007, may be extended if it suits both parties.

Members air concerns about SPPP

About 60 CAPS members gathered at the Yarloop Sports Pavilion on 8 October to discuss their concerns about the Supplemental Property Purchase Program (SPPP), which is one of the conditions the State Government has imposed on Alcoa's expansion. Each member had the opportunity to state their concerns, complaints or questions, and a compilation of these statements was incorporated into a letter to the Premier and Mr Hendy Cowan, which was signed by each member present.

The issues most common were:

- Needing clarification of program
- Concern about long-term land values
- Feeling pushed out of the community
- Concerns over additional transport and noise in area
- Worries over increases in high levels of emissions
- Being financially disadvantaged by selling
- Refusal by Alcoa to buy back houses they sold in B area

The letter was presented to the Premier and discussed with Mr Cowan, who is supervising the implementation of the Program. Mr Cowan will include the concerns in a report at the end of the registration period. As details for this program have yet to be established, CAPS continue to pursue their inclusion in the decision-making process as a major stakeholder. (*Read more about SPPP on page 2.*)

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"Success is not a position in life. It is all those things we have overcome to get wherever we are."

-- Booker T. Washington



The SPPP – what it means to you

The Supplementary Property Purchase Program (SPPP) is part of the six-point package the State Government has “developed to address environmental, economic and social concerns in Yarloop and surrounds.” The scheme offers “expanded and enhanced land purchase and relocation programs to be funded by Alcoa.” Basically, the SPPP maintains the current Area A and B purchasing scheme, with valuation reflecting prices in Harvey and Waroona, while offering to purchase residences and farms outside the A and B areas. To qualify for the SPPP, the property owner must register their interest with Mr Hendy Cowan by calling 1800 667 215 before 4 April 2007, and must demonstrate a concern about Alcoa’s operation or expansion. Membership in CAPS is valid qualification for this scheme.

While the SPPP acknowledges that concerns about Alcoa exist outside of the current A and B areas, the scheme is inequitable and unfair. While those in Area A are offered unaffected market value (as compared to Harvey or Waroona) plus 35% and relocation costs, those in Area B continue to only receive unaffected market value, with no additional benefit. Those in the supplementary area only receive the determined value of their property. All sellers are required to pay stamp duty and taxes involved in the sale, as well.

CAPS believe **no resident should be out-of-pocket**, and calls for a formal 10 km buffer zone to be established, with all impacted residents who wish to move to receive the total replacement plus compensation and relocation. Stamp duty and taxes should be covered by Alcoa, as well. All those who are displaced by Alcoa’s operations should be fairly compensated for the disruption of their lives.

The SPPP also overlooks the resale of properties from those in Area B who bought homes from Alcoa. As many buyers of these properties signed agreements with no knowledge or information about a possible future Wagerup expansion, CAPS believe that these properties should be eligible for the purchasing scheme. Neither small businesses nor renters are covered by this program and face true hardship if they wish to relocate for health reasons. CAPS also continue to promote the creation of a new town, so as to maintain the social fabric of affected communities, which would provide an option for those wishing to relocate.

All impacted and/or concerned residents are encouraged to register interest in selling to Alcoa, whether you think you are eligible or not. The more people registering, the more seriously the Government will consider the situation.

Though CAPS have presented members’ concerns to the Government, it is important that each affected resident express their individual concerns about the SPPP, clearly and succinctly, by writing or calling Mr Cowan, the Premier, and the Department of Industry and Resources, which is overseeing the program. Stress that the SPPP does not adequately address the interests of the majority of affected residents, and CAPS, as the community representative, should be involved in the decision-making process.

Contact information:

Mr Hendy Cowan
PO Box 272
Waroona 6215
Phone 1800 667 215

Hon Mr Alan Carpenter
Premier
24th Floor, Governor Stirling Tower
197 St Georges Terrace
Perth 6000
Phone 9222 9888
Email admin@dpc.wa.gov.au

Mr Brian Wood
Dept of Industry & Resources
1 Adelaide Terrace
East Perth 6004
Phone 9222 0591

Remember, we were here first!



Summaries of Meeting Minutes

- 9-4-06** **Executive Committee meeting with Environment Minister Mark McGowan** to support CAPS' case against the expansion. Discussed proof of health effects, need for buffer zone, acceptable levels of toxins, the dangers of particulate matter, problems with the ERMP, inadequate community consultation, and land management issues.
- 9-4-06** **Membership meeting with Minister McGowan** to discuss community concerns about expansion. Detailed health impacts, unfair delineation of buffer zone, social impacts of Alcoa, problems with CCN, environmental hazards, inequitable valuation of homes. Unanimous showing of hands as to who would stay in Yarloop if there was no problem, and almost as many who want to move out because of the problems. 50 in attendance.
- 12-4-06** **Executive Committee meeting with Appeals Convenor, Darren Walsh.** Discussed issues concerning appeal made against the ERMP. Discussed air quality, health risks, land management problems, noise, greenhouse gases, water usage and quality, red mud lakes, transport disruptions, mining, the cogeneration plant, and problems with community consultation.
- 19-7-06** **Annual General Meeting.** Chairperson reported about Bucket Brigade, Ombudsman investigations, media coverage, and the upcoming social research study to be done by Dr. Martin Brueckner from Edith Cowan University. The secretary reported that there were 106 paid members, with 64% from Yarloop, 16% from Hamel, 10% from the Peel Region, and 10% from Cookernup and Waroona. The treasurer reported a balance of \$5040. Election of committee members (*names available on request*). A special resolution was passed to change membership from annual to lifetime.

What's happening????

- State Ombudsman investigation into Dept of Environment continues. Other investigation concluded no wrongdoing by the Dept of Local Government and Regional Development. CAPS will follow-up.
- Local residents are being interviewed by Dr. Martin Brueckner of Edith Cowan University for his study on social changes in Yarloop. Those interested in being interviewed may contact 0439649028.
- The CAPS market stall at the British Auto Classic in Waroona on 29 October raised approximately \$160. A weekend stall in Harvey also netted \$210. A big **THANK YOU** to all who donated and volunteered!!!!
- CAPS members discussing the inclusion of community air quality monitoring projects in the Natural Heritage Trust funding with Federal Environment Minister Ian Campbell's office. More to come!

The Particulars on Particulate Matter

There have been many studies around the globe to examine the effects of particles on health, particularly PM 2.5 and PM 10. These tiny particles are suspended bits of dust and substances that may include other toxins adhering to them. Particulate matter may enter the body through inhalation, consumption of contaminated food or liquid, or absorption. These particles are associated with serious health effects, such as respiratory and cardiovascular disease.

Not only can local residents and Alcoa workers be exposed to dangerous particulate matter which blows off the red mud lakes, but also to particles emitted by the refinery, including caustic and other chemicals which adhere to dust particles in the atmosphere.

The Yarloop Bucket Brigade is able to test for some particulate matter accumulation through dust wipe sampling. Initial tests on a local property found high levels of aluminium and iron, which can cause lung problems. You may organise testing by calling 9733 5011 or 0400738273.

To protect yourself from exposure to toxic particulate matter, dry your wet laundry indoors or use a dryer. Observe wind direction. On windy days when dust is observed blowing off the RDA, limit your time spent outdoors and wear a dust mask. When you notice an odour, keep windows and doors closed in your home and car, and have the children play indoors. Air purifiers may help with indoor air quality.

**Community
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Visit our website -

www.geocities.com/caps6218

*We will soon have a new,
improved website located at*

www.caps6218.org.au

*Keep checking for it to come
online!*

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HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

If you experience odours, health effects, and/or observe clouds of pollution near the ground that could possibly be coming from Alcoa, please follow these steps:

1. Contact the Yarloop Bucket Brigade immediately at 0400738273 or 0409335011 to take a sample, if the odour is strong and lingering.
2. If visible, photograph the event.
3. Contact Adam West at the Dept of Environment at 9550 4231 as soon as possible with details of time, smell, wind direction, and health effects.
4. Fill out a Yarloop Bucket Brigade log sheet, available from the General Store or by emailing caps6218@yahoo.com. Deposit the log sheet at the Yarloop General Store or give to the attending Bucket Brigade member.
5. You may also choose to complain to Alcoa.

Protecting your privacy It is our duty of care to protect the privacy of our members. There are still a few people who are not sympathetic to our cause or compassionate towards those suffering health effects, and these people have, at times, been confrontational. To protect the privacy of our members, we will only publish names with expressed consent. You may meet other members, supporters and the executive committee in person at CAPS Membership Meetings. Questions concerning this policy can be addressed by co-chairs Vince Puccio 9733 5011 or Merv McDonald 0409370235.

A healthy environment for living and working is your basic human right.

